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Lords'ps Charitable assistance, as well in the Stopping the utter downfall of this tottring Country as the obtaining such gracious Condescensions from his Majestie as may tend to their preservation, and Releife.

R't Hon'bl

Directed

To the R't Hon'ble the Lords
of his Majesties most hono'ble
Privy Councill appointed a
Committee for trade and ffor-
reigne plantations.

Your Lords'ps most
humble Devoted Servant
Robert Beverley Cl:
Ass'by of Virg'a

At ye Councill Chamb'r
Whitehall.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

NEWPORT'S VIRGINIA'S DISCOVERY, 1607.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE JAMES RIVER, THE COUNTRY ON ITS BANKS AND THE ABORIGINAL INHABITANTS.

[This is the earliest description of Virginia, and was probably the first sent to England, as it is dated June 1st, and it is known from other sources that the ship Phoenix (the earliest to return to England), was off the Capes on her homeward voyage on June 2d. The exploration of James river, on which this description was based, was commenced a few days after the arrival of the settlers at Jamestown and lasted until May 27th. These valuable papers have been only once printed, in *Archæologia Americana*, Vol. IV, pp. 40-65, in 1860. They are therefore worthy of reprinting at this time. The companion paper, *A Relatyon of the Discovery of Our river, &c.*, was printed as above and also in Arber's *Works of John Smith*, Vol. I, xl-lvi, and is therefore not reprinted.]

COLONIAL PAPERS, VOL. I, 151.

The Description of the Now-Discovered River and Country of Virginia, with the Liklyhood of Ensuing Ritches, by England's Ayd and Industry.

This river we have named o'r King's river extends it self 160 myles into the Mayne land between two fertile and fragrant banks, two miles, a mile, and where it is least a quarter of a myle broad, navigable for shipping of 300 tunn 150 miles; the rest deep enough for small vessells of six foot drought; it ebbs and flowes 4 foote, even to the skirt of an overfall, where the water falls down from huge great Rocks; making in the fall five or six severall Isletts, very fitt for the buylding of water milnes thereon, beyond this not two dayes journey, it hath two branches w'ch come through a high stoney cōuntry from certain huge mountaines called Quirank, beyond w'ch needs no relac'on (this from the overfall was the report and description of a faithful fellow, who I dare well trust upon good reasons) from these mountaines Quirank came two lesse rivers w'ch runn into this great one, but whether deep enough for shippes or noe I yet understand not, there be many small Rivers of brooks w'ch unlade themselves into this mayne river at severall mouthes, w'ch veynes divide the salvage Kingdoms in many places, and yeeld pleasant seates, in all the country over by moystering the frutefull mould. The mayne river abounds w'th sturgeon very large and excellent good; having also at the mouth of every brook and in every creek both store and exceeding good fish of divers kinds, in ye large sounds neere the sea are multitudes of fish, banks of oysters, and many great crabbs rather better, in fact, than oures, are able to suffice 4 men, and within sight of land into the sea we expect at tyme of yeare to have a good fishing for codd, as both at o'r ent'ring we might p'ceive by palpable conjecture seeing the codd follow the shipp yea bite at the [blank in the MSS.] as also out of my owne experience not farre of to the northward, the fishing I found in my first voyage to Virginia.

This land lyeth low at the mouth of the river & is sandy ground, all over besett with fayre pyne trees, but a little up the

river it is reasonable high, and the further we go (till we came to the overfall it still ryseth increasing. It is generally replenish't w'th wood of all kinds and that the fayrest yea and the best that any of us (traveller or workman) ever sawe, being fitt for use whatsoever, as shipps, howses, planks, poles, boordes, waynescott, clappboard, for pikes or elsewhat.

The soyle is more fertill than can be well exprest it is altogether aromaticall giving a spicy taste to the rootes of all trees plants and hearbs: of it self a black fatt sand mould somewhat slymy in touch and sweet in savor: under w'ch about a yard is in most places a redd clay fitt for brick, in other marle, in some signification of mynerall, in other gravell stones and rocks, it hath in diverse places fullers earth, and such as comes out of Turkey called terra siggillata. It p'duceth of one come [corne?] of that country wheate some-times two or three stems or stalks on w'ch grow eares above a spann long besett w'th cornes at least 300 upon an eare for the most part 5, 6 & 700. the beanes and peaz of this country have a great increase also: It yeelds two cropps a yeare. Being temp(er)ed and tyme taken I hold it natures nurse to all vegitables for I assure myself no knoune continent brings forth any vendible necessaryes w'h this by planting will not afford: for testimony in part, this we fynd by proof: from the west Indies we brought a certaine delicious fruite called a pina, w'ch the Spanyard by all art possible could never p'cure to grow in any place, but in his natural site, this we rudely and carelessly sett in o'r mould, w'ch fostereth it and keeps it greene. and to what Issue it may come I know not, our west Indy plants of oranges & cotton trees thrive well, likewise the potatoes, pumpious & millions: All o'r garden seeds, that were carefuiy souned p[ro]sper well, yet we only digged the ground half a * * * deep throw in the seeds at randome carelessly, and scarce rakt it. It naturally yeelds mulbery trees, cherry trees, vines abundance, gooseberryes, strawberryes, huckleberryes, Respesses, ground nutts, scarretts, the roote called sigilla christi, certain sweet thym, shelled nutts, certaine ground aples, a pleasant fruite any [?] Many other unknown. So the thing we crave is some skillful man to husband, sett, plant, and dresse vynes, sugar canes, olives ropes hemp flax, lyceris pruynes, currants, raysons, and all such things, as the north

Tropick of the world offords: also saffran woad hoppes and such like.

The comodities of the country, what they are in else, is not much to be regarded, the inhabitants having no concerne w'h any nation, no respect of p[ro]fitt, neither is there scarce that we call *meum et tuum*, among them save onely the Kings know their owne territoryes, & the people their severall gardens yet this for the present by the consent of all o'r seamen, meerly o'r fyshing for sturgeon, cannot be lesse worth then 1,000 £ a yeare, leaving hering and codd as possibilitys.

Our clapboard and waynscott (if shipps will but fetch it) we may make as much as England can vent: We can send (if we be frends w'h the salvage or be able to force them) 2, 3, 4, or 5,000 £ a yeare of the earth called *terra siggillata*. Saxafroge what store we pleast. Tobacco after a yeare or two 5,000 £ a year. We have (as we suppose) ritch dyes, if they p[ro]ve vendible, worth more than yet is nominated; We have excellant furr, in some places of the country great store; we can make pitch Rozen and Turpentyne; there is a gume w'ch bleedeth from a kind of maple (the bark being cutt) not much unlike a Balsome both in sent and vertue. Hepothicary druggs of diverse sorts, some known to be of good estimacon, some strange of whose vertue the salvages report wonders—We can by o'r industry and plantacon of comodious marchandisze make oyles wyne soape ashes, wood ashes, extract from minerall earth Iron copper etc.; We have a good fishing for musles, w'ch resemble mother of pearle, & if the pearle we have seene in the Kings eares & about their necks come from these shells we know the banks. To conclude I know not what can be expected from a comon wealth that either this land affords not or may soone yeeld.

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PEOPLE.

There is a King in this land called great Powhatan, under whose dominion are at least zoty severall kingdoms, yet each King potent as a prince in his own territory. These have their subjects at so quick command, as a beck brings obedience, even to the restitucon of stolen goods w'ch by their naturall inclinacon they are loth to leave. They goe almost naked, yet in coole

weather they weare deare skinns, w'th the hayre on loose; some have leather stockings up to their thighs & sandalls on their feet, their hayre is black generally, w'ch they weare long on their left side, tyed up on a knott about w'ch knott the kings and best among them have a kind of coronett of deares hayre colored redd, some have chaines of long lincks copper about their necks, and some chaines of pearle, the common sort stick long fethers in this knott, I found not a gray eye among them all. Their skynn is tawny not so borne, but w'ch dying and paynting themselves, in w'ch they delight greatly. The women are like the men—only this difference their hayre groweth long al over their heads save clipt somewhat short afore, these do all the labo'r and the men hunt and goe at their pleasure. They live comonly by the water side in little cottages made of canes and reeds, covered w'th the barks of trees; they dwell as I guesse by families of kindred & allyance some 40tie or 50tie in a Hatto or small village; w'ch townes are not past a myle or half a myle asunder in most places. They live upon sodden wheat beanes & peaze for the most part, also they kill deare take fish in their weares & kill fowle abundance, they eat often and that liberally; they are prop[er] lusty streight men very strong runn exceeding swiftly, their feight [fight] is alway in the wood with bow & arrowes & a short wooden sword, the celerity they use in skirmish is admirable. The King directs the battle and is alway's in front.

Their manner of entertainment is upon mattes on the ground under some tree, where they sit themselves alone in the midst of the matt, and two matts on each side, on w'ch they[re] people sitt, then right against him (making a square forme) satt we always. When they came to their matt they have another goes before them and the rest as he sits downe give a long showt. The people steale anything comes neare them, yea are so practiced in this art that looking in o'r face they would w'th their foot between their toes convey a chizell knife, peices of any indifferent light: w'ch having once conveyed they hold it an injury to take the same from them. They are naturally given to trechery, howbeit we could not finde it in o'r travell up the river, but rather a most kind and loving people. The sacrifice Tobacco to the Sunn fayre picture or a harmful thing, as a

sword or peece also, they sprinkle some into the water in the morning before they wash. they have many wives, to whome as neare as I could p'rceive they Keep constant. the great King Powhatan had most wives. * * * The women are very cleanly in making their bread and preparing meat. I found they account after death to goe into another world pointing eastward & the element & when they saw us at prayer they observed us w'th great silence and respect, especially those to whome I had imparted the meaning of o'r reverence. To conclude they are very witty and ingenius people, apt both to understand and speake o'r language, so that I hope in God as he hath miraculously p'rserved us hither from all danger both of sea and land & their fury so he will make us authors of his holy will in converting them to o'r true christian faith by his owne inspiring grace and knowledge of his duty.

[Endorsed] *Capten Newport of Virginias*
Discovery Virginia 21 June, 1607.

THE STARVING TIME.

LETTERS FROM LORD DE LA WARE TO THE EARL OF SALISBURY.

[Near the close of the year 1608 Thomas West, Lord Delaware, was appointed Governor and Captain-General of Virginia.

The custom of the day was for the Governor-in-Chief to remain in England and the colony to be governed, immediately, by a deputy.

Accordingly, Sir Thomas Gates, Lieutenant-Governor, with Somers and Newport, and a fleet of nine ships left England in the latter part of May, 1609.

The great storm encountered, the wreck of the ship containing the three leaders on the Bermudas (which probably gave the first suggestion for "The Tempest") their lengthy stay at the